



Regulation

ON TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF CHARGING IN COMMUNICATIONS NETWORKS

Issued in Helsinki on 25 June 2009

The Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority (FICORA) has, under section 24 of the Act on the Protection of Privacy in Electronic Communications of 16 June 2004 (516/2004) and section 129 of the Communications Market Act of 23 May 2003 (393/2003), prescribed as follows:

Section 1

Scope of application

This regulation applies to charging in public telephone networks and in network services and communications services provided in these networks.

Section 2

Definitions

For the purposes of this Regulation:

charging data collection means technical methods for determining and registering the use of telecommunications connections and services in communications networks;

billing means the post-processing of the charging data and other technical and administrative functions for collecting fees from a customer for the use of telecommunications connections and communications services. A customer can also be another telecommunications operator;

accounting means the post-processing of the charging data and other technical and administrative functions enabling a telecommunications operator to transfer to another operator those fees it has collected on behalf of the other operator;

charging means all technical and administrative functions related to charging data collection, billing and accounting in telecommunications;

data collection record means a specified-form record for the charged transaction;

answer message means a message transferred in signalling to indicate that the connection has been established.

Section 3

Charging correctness

Charging shall be carried out so that data collection records containing a charging error due to the telecommunications operator's own activity does not occur in more than 0.01% of all data collection records. Errors detected and corrected before billing, errors detected through complaints from customers, and errors detected by the operators themselves after billing are considered as charging errors. In order to fulfil this requirement, the telecommunications operator shall monitor the amount of incorrect data collection records.

When charging data collection is based on measurement of time, the duration of the connection shall be registered with an accuracy of 1 second.

The accuracy of the impulse interval shall be set to 0.1 seconds up to 100 seconds and to 1 second for impulse intervals exceeding 100 seconds.

The telecommunications operator shall see to that the calendar time in the node affecting the charging does not differ from the official time in Finland more than +/-5 seconds.

Systems used for recording the charging data shall be secured.

The telecommunications operator shall ensure that charging is always operating properly immediately after changes made in the network hardware or software. The operation shall be ensured at least for the most common traffic cases and for traffic cases assumed to be especially affected by the changes.

The telecommunications operators shall see to that information transmitted over the operators' interconnection interfaces is sufficient for the implementation of a reliable and accurate charging of telecommunications connections.

If the telecommunications operator also takes care of charging of services which are offered via the telecommunication connection but delivered by others, it shall be responsible for the technical correctness of the charging procedure also in such cases.

Section 4

Implementation of charging

Charging shall be technically implemented so that

General requirements

- 1) the charges can be determined prior to the connection according to price lists or agreements;
- 2) data collection information is transmitted and stored in a way that enables itemized billing of calls according to provisions;
- 3) the price of a call to the caller does not depend on routing of the call or interconnection between different networks if the customer can not choose them. For ported numbers, however, the price of the call, short message or multimedia message is determined to the caller according to the recipient operator's network;
- 4) charging is based on the network service or communications service that the customer gets but, if the network provides better service than the customer requested, charging is based on the service requested by the customer;

Services charged on the basis of time

- 5) time-based charging of a service begins when a connection is established and an answer message received;
- 6) time-based charging of a service ends at the connection release;
- 7) the price for queuing to an access for which both a call charge and a service fee is charged is not higher than the usual call charge;

Price information of services

- 8) price information for calls to service numbers from the public fixed telephone network may not cost the caller more than the local network charge and price information for calls from the public mobile network may not cost more than the mobile call charge;
- 9) price information for a short message service may not cost the caller more than the basic charge for sending a short message;

Free-of-charge calls and announcements

- 10) the telecommunications operators agree on the implementation of calls for which no fee is charged in cases where information related to these calls is transmitted over the operators' interface;
- 11) announcements for a telephone network specified in standards are free of charge, excluding the announcement informing that the number has changed, if it includes exact information about the new number;
- 12) the telecommunications operators agree between themselves on the necessary arrangements if other announcements than those specified in standards or services implemented with automatic answer machines are offered without charge.

Section 5

Period of validity

This regulation enters into force on 1 July 2009 and will remain in force until further notice.

Section 6

Information and publication

This Regulation is included in the Series of Regulations issued by the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority and it can be obtained from the FICORA Customer Service Office:

Office address	Itämerenkatu 3 A, HELSINKI
Postal address	P.O. Box 313 FI-00181 HELSINKI
Tel. national	09 6966 500
Tel. international	+358 9 6966 500
Fax national	09 6966 410
Fax international	+358 9 6966 410
Website	http://www.ficora.fi/
Business ID	0709019-2

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Director-General Rauni Hagman

Director Timo Lehtimäki